

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01338 110656Z

15

ACTION EB-07

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R 110614Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3173

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1338

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BTRA, SY

SUBJECT: TOURISM: VISIT TO SYRIA BY SERVICE WORLD INTERNATIONAL GROUP

1. EMBASSY BELIEVES APRIL 6 TO 8 VISIT BY "SERVICE WORLD INTERNATIONAL" PUBLISHER FERGUS MCKEEVER AND HIS GROUP OF APPROXIMATELY 45 AMERICAN HOTEL SPECIALISTS FROM MANY PARTS OF US PROVIDED USEFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMERCIAL CONTACTS IN SYRIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY WHICH DEFINITELY ON THE MOVE. EMBASSY ASSISTED MCKEEVER IN INVITING PRIVATE SYRIAN BUSINESSMEN IN TOURISM SECTOR, AND ALSO DEPUTY MINISTER OF TOURISM BURHAN KASSAB HASSAN AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF TO GROUP'S RECEPTION, LUNCHEON AND "IDEA EXCHANGE" AT SEMIRAMIS HOTEL APRIL 7.

2. AFTER OPENING REMARKS BY DEPUTY MINISTER AND CHARGE, "IDEA EXCHANGE" MOVED INTO LIVELY PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD BETWEEN AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN AND PRIVATE SECTOR AND MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES, WITH SYRIANS STRONGLY EMPHASIZING DESIRE FOR AMERICAN COMMERCIAL PARTICIPATION IN THIS SECTOR UNDERGOING STRONG ANNUAL GROWTH OF 15,000 BEDS AND \$55 MILLION INVESTMENT PER YEAR OVER NEXT 10 YEARS.

3. MCKEEVER IS WELL-EXPERIENCED IN SHEPARDING GROUP OF UNCLASSIFIED

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THIS SORT AND WE BELIEVE VISIT WAS WELL-RECEIVED BY SYRIANS.

THIS AND TIME, INC. "NEWSTOUR" HAVE BEEN LARGEST AMERICAN
GROUP TOURS WE ARE AWARE OF TO VISIT SYRIA SINCE
RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS LAST YEAR AND WE WISH TO
ENCOURAGE MORE SUCH VISITS. THEY ARE USEFUL NOT ONLY
FROM COMMERCIAL POINT OF VIEW BUT ALSO IN PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE
CONTACT.
PELLETREAU

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NNN

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